



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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## **Media briefing**

### **Western state Ag directors to shape national farm policy at Tri-Cities conference**

OLYMPIA — Questions about the 2002 Farm Bill will be addressed at 4 p.m. Aug. 10 by Washington State Agriculture Director Jim Jesernig and Leon Graves, president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. The briefing will take place at the Hampton Inn, 486 Bradley Blvd. in Richland.

The Farm Bill, now under consideration before Congress, is a multiyear plan that authorizes most federal agriculture programs. It will have a huge impact on farm policies in Washington state. These programs cover commodities, credit, conservation, rural development, trade and nutrition.

Jesernig is hosting the Western Association of State Departments of Agriculture conference, Aug. 11 to 15. Directors and commissioners of agriculture from 13 western states, federal officials, and agricultural industry representatives will attend.

Tuesday, Aug. 14 the agricultural leaders will tour the Snake River and Ice Harbor Dam where they will learn about the importance of barging to the nation's agricultural industry and the impact of dam breaching on the Western energy supply. A second media briefing is scheduled for about 10:30 a.m. at the Ice Harbor Dam visitors center. (Details to follow next week.)

Through the Farm Bill, state directors and commissioners of agriculture are seeking a sufficient safety net for agricultural producers, and policies that will help producers manage risks.

Graves is commissioner of the Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

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